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**From:** Crutchfield, Larry  
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[GSENM Resolution-Talking Points.docx](#)

Cindy/Matt,

Attached is the talking point paper to date. Still have a lot more I'd like to get into it...primarily the visitation and SRP data.

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Respectfully,  
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## Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Resolutions/Legislation

### Talking Points

**BACKGROUND:**

- As you are aware, there has been much discussion recently about downsizing GSENM or creating a Hole-in-the-Rock State Park
- Kane County passed a resolution to “begin a dialog with the US BLM about the GSENM and its boundaries”.
- Garfield County is scheduled to do the same this week.
- The Utah State legislature passed House Concurrent Resolution 12, which directs Kane and Garfield counties to begin discussions with the BLM about GSENM boundaries, and asks Utah’ delegation in Congress to seek federal legislation to cut the monument’s boundary to the minimum area necessary. Similar legislation is working through the Utah legislature on Hole-in-the-Rock State Park .
- Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners have opposed these resolutions, as have many local, statewide, and national individuals and groups.

**AGENCY POSITION**

- [illegible]

**General Monument Talking Points**

- Designating Authority: Presidential Proclamation 6920, September 18, 1996
- Acreage: The Monument boundary encompasses approximately 1,880,461 total acres including 14,130 acres that are privately held. There is no state land found within GSENM.
- Budget:
 

Total Fiscal Year 2016 Budget	\$7,029,800
Subactivity 1711	\$4,728,600
Other Subactivities' Contributions	\$1,274,000
Other Funding	\$1,027,200

**Mineral Extraction**

- The Presidential Proclamation withdrew Monument lands from mineral extraction; however, valid existing mineral leases at the time the Monument was designated could continue.
  - The Upper Valley Oil Field is a good example of a valid existing lease at the time of Monument designation that continues today.
  - For many years after the Monument's designation, a family-owned alabaster mine operated on the Monument; it has since closed.
  - The two coal companies holding leases on the Monument at the time of designation could still be mining coal today because they had valid existing rights. They made a business decision to relinquish their leases.

**Grazing**

- The Presidential proclamation designating the Monument in 1996 included language specifically providing for the continuation of grazing on the Monument.
- Overall permitted use within the Monument is at roughly the same level now as it has been since the early 1990s. No reductions have occurred as a result of the Monument's designation, though small reductions within limited areas have taken place under normal BLM procedures to protect riparian resources and to address other issues (including recreation conflicts). When the Monument was designated, there were 106,645 total AUMs. Of these, 77,400 were active AUMs. Today there are 106,202 total AUMs and 76,957 active. Actual use levels averaged just over 41,000 AUMs; and vary from year to year in response to drought conditions and variability in a rancher's livestock operations.
- Since 1999, the Monument has used an average 54.4% of its active AUMs (based on billable AUMs). By comparison, the neighboring Kanab Field Office has used 55.7% of its active AUMs.
- On the Monument, roughly 28% of its total AUMs are suspended; compared to more than 40% of total AUMs suspended in KFO.
- There are 79 active livestock grazing allotments, with 91 permittees currently authorized to graze cattle and horses on the Monument. No sheep or goats are grazing on the Monument.
- Grazing – Ongoing Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment/EIS
- Livestock grazing on the Monument is presently guided by four Management Framework Plans that were completed in the 1980s because the 1999 Monument Management Plan did not address grazing or make grazing decisions.

- The Monument is currently engaged in a public process to prepare a Livestock Grazing Monument Management Plan Amendment and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The goal is to find a decision that will enable sustained use of the land through improved land health and science-based grazing management.
- A full range of alternatives have been developed and are currently being analyzed. A draft document is expected out for public comment in the summer of 2017.
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#### Wildlife

- The Proclamation establishing Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument (The Monument), dated September 18, 1996 states: "Nothing in this proclamation shall be deemed to diminish the responsibility and authority of the State of Utah for management of fish and wildlife, including regulation of hunting and fishing, on Federal lands within the monument".
- A pronghorn reintroduction program began in 1999 and continued until 2005. During this period, nearly 400 pronghorn were reintroduced to areas of the Monument. This reintroduced herd allowed hunting opportunities for pronghorn on the Kaiparowits unit up until 2015. The

decision to halt pronghorn hunting on this unit was made by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) due to a decline in herd number. The decline is thought to be related to climate more than anything else and the hunt will be reinstated once pronghorn have recovered.

- An aggressive desert bighorn sheep augmentation program began in the late 1970's and continues to be implemented. As recently as 2014 75 additional bighorn sheep were brought in from Nevada and released on the Monument in areas with low density native sheep. Since 2006 over 200 bighorn have been released on the Monument. This has helped to increase herd numbers and allow continued hunting of this iconic species.
- Other species that have been introduced or reintroduced in the past include wild turkey, river otter, and chukar partridge (pre-Monument designation). There is currently a fall and spring turkey hunt on the Monument.
- The Monument is currently working with UDWR to find suitable release sites for Gambel's quail.

#### **Sage Grouse**

##### **Hunting**

- Hunting/fishing on the Monument is controlled by the State of Utah. A valid Utah hunting /fishing license & associate permits are required.
- Since the year 2011, the Monument has averaged 16 commercial hunting guide SRP's. The average income generated to these SRP holders combined has been \$42,800/year. The Monument provides hunting opportunities for deer, elk, pronghorn, desert bighorn sheep, mountain lion, black bear and turkey.

##### **Wildlife Projects**

- In the past decade, nearly 20,000 acres of vegetation enhancement have occurred on the Monument. These projects include hand-thinning or mulching of encroaching pinyon and juniper, chaining and harrowing of decadent shrublands to increase plant species and diversity and some prescribed fire or wildfire rehabilitation.
- The Monument has constructed dozens of wildlife water developments, seven within the past few years to further improve wildlife distribution.
- In 2006 the Monument completed the Fivemile Sagebrush Restoration Environmental Assessment which analyzed habitat treatments to improve sagebrush ecosystems on nearly 30,000 acres of Monument lands. Annually since that time, the Monument has partnered with BLM color country Fuels and Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative to apply for funding to complete the various phases of the project. Nearly 10,000 acres have been restored to functioning sagebrush ecosystems thanks to this project.
- In 2010, working in conjunction with the state and our other wildlife partners, money was secured to construct three large wildlife water catchments and storage facilities. The projects were constructed in the winter of 2010 and have helped immensely in providing dependable water sources on crucial mule deer winter range.
- In 2013, the Monument partnered with UDWR, Arizona Game and Fish, Utah Department of Transportation, Arizona Department of transportation, Kane county, and numerous other partners to secure funding and resources for the construction of 25 miles of deer proof highway

fencing and three wildlife crossing structures on U.S. Highway 89. The Monument submitted a proposal to the federal highways administration and received a 1.5 million dollar grant. This money was leveraged with our partners and the project totaling 2.5 million dollars was able to be completed with assistance from all partnering groups. Mule deer/vehicle collisions have been reduced by over 95% along this stretch of highway.

- Wildlife Studies on the Monument include studies related to hummingbirds, bats, cougars, bear, pronghorn, reptiles, invertebrates and insects.

#### **Volunteers**

- In FY2016, the Monument sponsored 103 volunteers and 93 hosted workers for a total of 196. These volunteers and Hosted Workers performed a total of 42,628 hours to our programs with a monetary value of \$983,428.

#### **Science:**

##### **Tribal**

- Working with other area federal agencies and private groups, GSENM co-sponsored the Kwiyaumuntsi and Kaibab Paiute Youth Camp for regional Paiute Youth. GSENM staff gave 10 formal presentations to 36 participants.

##### **Paleontology**

- The Kaiparowits Plateau preserves one of the most complete records of Late Cretaceous terrestrial vertebrate evolution in the world. The 7,000 feet of rock layers in the region span almost 30 million years of environmental change that foreshadows the mass extinction event 66.5 million years ago that ended the reign of the dinosaurs. Major events recorded in Kaiparowits Plateau strata include the diversification of flowering plants and the rise of many fish, mammal, turtle, dinosaur and reptile groups. The true significance of this resource comes from the totality of fossils being found in every layer, not just the Kaiparowits and Wahweap formations. Part of this important Late Cretaceous story is also preserved in the adjacent Paunsaugunt and Markagunt Plateaus, but because of their higher elevations, they are too soiled over and vegetated to make it accessible. Therefore one of the most important reasons the Kaiparowits stands out as such a important scientific resource is its so barren and sparsely vegetated. The Book Cliffs lack the fossil bone, the Henry Mountains record mostly marine conditions. There literally is no other place like it on the continent.
- Almost 4,000 fossil sites have been documented throughout the Monument, with the vast majority of those in the Kaiparowits Plateau area. From these sites, tens of thousands of fossil specimens have been collected. Preservation of fossils in the Kaiparowits is as good as the best Cretaceous fossil sites anywhere else in North America. Soft bodied insects, delicate birds, and nearly whole dinosaurs with impressions of skin, claws, and beaks have been found. The conditions to preserve fossils were truly exceptional. To date, about 100,000 acres have been surveyed in the Kaiparowits of a possible 500,000 to 750,000 acres with fossil potential.
- The Kaiparowits region has produced the world's oldest nameable specimens of crested hadrosaur, true ceratopsid (horned), and tyrannosaur (T-rex ancestor) dinosaurs, giving insights into the origins of those iconic groups. A diverse group of marine reptiles that includes North America's oldest mosasaur have also been found in the Tropic Shale along the southern margin of the Kaiparowits Plateau.
- Most of the best fossil finds have been made in the western half of the Kaiparowits, but the east has been little surveyed. Formations in those areas have an unknown potential.

- Twelve new species of dinosaurs have been named from the Kaiparowits Plateau since 2005, with another three scheduled for publication in 2017. This makes it one of the most productive research areas in the world for finding new kinds of dinosaurs. Many others that have already been found await description. Collectively these new species are defining a whole new ecosystem in the southern US we had no idea existed.
- The significance of the Kaiparowits is such that it forms the core of the Natural History Museum of Utah's dinosaur exhibits and been the subject of two major books, one technical and one for the general public.

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